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General Assembly

Fifty-second Session

Official Records

73rd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 16 December 1997, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Udovenko . . . . . (Ukraine)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Tello (Mexico), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 20 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Draft resolution (A/52/L.45/Rev.1)

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Notes by the Secretary-General (A/52/270, A/52/443)

Draft resolution (A/52/L.48/Rev.1)

(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/52/297, A/52/341, A/52/433, A/52/434, A/52/500, A/52/525, A/52/532, A/52/535, A/52/562, A/52/563, A/52/568, A/52/678)

Draft resolutions (A/52/L.14/Rev.2, A/52/L.16/Rev.2, A/52/L.34/Rev.1, A/52/L.36/Rev.1, A/52/L.37, A/52/L.40/Rev.1, A/52/L.41, A/52/L.42/Rev.1, A/52/L.43/Rev.1, A/52/L.44/Rev.1, A/52/L.46/Rev.1, A/52/L.56, A/52/L.58/Rev.1, A/52/L.60, A/52/L.61/Rev.1)

(d) Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/159)

Draft resolution (A/52/L.57/Rev.1)

(e) Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development

Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/586)

Draft resolution (A/52/L.32/Rev.1)

(f) Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster

Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/537)

Draft resolution (A/52/L.33/Rev.1)

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg to introduce draft resolutions A/52/L.45/Rev.1 and A/52/L.57/Rev.1.

97-86752 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour today to introduce two draft resolutions. The first, draft resolution A/52/L.45/Rev.1, deals with the safety and security of humanitarian personnel. In addition to the sponsors already listed on the draft resolution, India and the United States of America have expressed the wish to sponsor the draft.

The security of humanitarian personnel is an aspect of humanitarian assistance that, unfortunately, has moved increasingly to the forefront of current events. The draft resolution before us reflects the deep concern of the international community at the growing number of situations throughout the world in which the security of such personnel is called into question.

In the draft resolution before us, the General Assembly would reaffirm the need to respect the principles and norms of international humanitarian law and would strongly condemn any act or failure to act that obstructs humanitarian personnel or prevents them from discharging their humanitarian functions.

The General Assembly would call upon Governments and parties to conflicts, as well as those in other emergency situations, to ensure humanitarian personnel unhindered access to affected populations and to take all necessary measures so that humanitarian action can take place in a safe environment.

It would also call on States to hold responsible any person committing an act of violence against humanitarian personnel.

Finally, the Assembly would honour the memory of those who have given their lives to assist people in distress and pay tribute to humanitarian personnel for their courage in continuing to perform their functions often in high-risk situations.

The sponsors would like particularly to express their thanks to the Permanent Representative of Austria, Mr. Ernst Sucharipa, for the very effective way in which he conducted the consultations this year and to all the delegations that participated constructively in our informal negotiations on this draft resolution. We hope that the General Assembly will be able to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

I have the honour to introduce a second draft resolution, A/52/L.57/Rev.1, on behalf of the sponsors listed in the document. India, Indonesia and Norway have also expressed the wish to be sponsors of the draft resolution.

The peace process is a fragile and vulnerable construct. Without economic assistance, the Palestinian people's level of poverty and political frustration would be much higher. The urgent need to give the Palestinian people substantial international assistance that takes into account their own priorities, is increasingly clear.

The sponsors of the draft resolution before us attach particular importance to assistance to the Palestinian people. Mindful of the serious economic difficulties and employment problems that they face, the draft underscores the importance of urgently improving the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied Territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

The draft resolution expresses appreciation to the Secretary-General, to the Member States and to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their activities and efforts to provide assistance to the Palestinian people. In this context, the sponsors stress the importance of the work done by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, as well as the action taken by the Secretary-General to set up a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities in that area.

The draft resolution, among other things, calls on relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building. Member States, for their part, are urged to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules.

Lastly, the sponsors call upon the donor community to expedite delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs.

The sponsors would like to thank all the delegations that were good enough to participate constructively in the informal negotiations and we hope that the Assembly will be able to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

The Acting President: *(interpretation from Spanish:* I call on the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.48/Rev.1.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations", contained in document A/52/L.48/Rev.1.

The short procedural draft resolution before the Assembly responds to the note by the Secretary-General of 8 October 1997, in which he outlined the context of his further reporting to the General Assembly regarding coordination of humanitarian assistance.

In his note the Secretary-General recalled Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 of 28 July 1995, in which the Council decided to undertake a review of the capacity of the United Nations to respond to humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters.

The Secretary-General also noted the decision by the Economic and Social Council last summer requesting the Secretary-General to present a more comprehensive report on humanitarian assistance to the Council at one of its subsequent sessions.

The operative paragraph of the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the further progress by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, in the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations in humanitarian assistance.

The draft resolution before the Assembly was approved in the informal consultations conducted by Ambassador Sucharipa of Austria, and I hope that it will be adopted by the General Assembly by consensus.

Due to the procedural nature of the draft resolution, no co-sponsorship has been a sought.

Before concluding, I would like to pay special tribute to Mr. Akashi, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and to his staff, as well as to the United Nations agencies involved, for their dedication and unfailing commitment in addressing human suffering caused by emergencies and natural disasters.

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I call on the representative of Liberia to introduce draft resolutions A/52/L.14/Rev.2, L.16/Rev.2 and L.40/Rev.1, L.42/Rev.1 and L.60.

Mr. Bull (Liberia): In my capacity as Chairman of the African Group for this month, I am pleased to introduce for the unanimous endorsement of the General Assembly five draft resolutions under agenda item 20 (b), on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance to individual countries or regions.

In draft resolution A/52/L.14/Rev.2, entitled "Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the Assembly would recognize that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is encountering severe economic and social problems which result from its weak infrastructure and years of mismanagement. It would note that, in spite of the genuine efforts made by the Government, the country still faces some difficulties in sustaining its reconstruction and development programmes. The Assembly would welcome the 4 December 1997 meeting of the "Friends of the Congo", chaired by the World Bank in Brussels, as an important step in establishing dialogue between the Government and the donor community. It would invite Member States, specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations, as well as international development and financial institutions, to assist the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in accordance with its national priorities.

Draft resolution A/52/L.16/Rev.2, entitled "Special assistance to Central African countries receiving refugees", expresses deep concern about the massive flow of refugees, returnees and other displaced persons in Central Africa and welcomes the prospects for the voluntary return, repatriation and reintegration of refugees in safety and dignity and the efforts made to find a durable solution to their plight. It notes that the flow of refugees in Central Africa has a negative social, economic, and ecological impact on the host countries, as well as on the refugees, and expresses gratitude to the host countries for their continued sacrifice in accommodating the refugees. The Assembly would express appreciation to all governmental and non-governmental organizations for the humanitarian, financial and technical assistance provided to refugees and the host countries and would call upon them to assist in restoring basic services destroyed in countries hosting refugees.

In draft resolution A/52/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia", the Assembly would commend the concerted efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations for helping to restore peace, security and stability in Liberia. It would take note of the presidential and legislative elections which culminated in the installation of a civilian Government on 2 August 1997. It would express gratitude to governmental and non-governmental organizations for their assistance and support for the peace process. The Assembly would request the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize all possible assistance within the United Nations system to assist the Government of Liberia in its reconstruction and development efforts, as well as in organizing a donors' conference early next year for the reconstruction of the country.

Draft resolution A/52/L.42, entitled "Emergency assistance to the Sudan", reflects the developments relating to the implementation of Operation Lifeline Sudan as outlined in the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/52/525. It recognizes the need in emergency situations to address the continuum of relief, rehabilitation and development and stresses the need for Operation Lifeline Sudan to have a tripartite nature — efficiency, transparency and effectiveness. It takes note of and is encouraged by the signing in April 1997 of the Peace Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and rebel factions for the achievement of peace in that country and encourages further consultation and negotiations between the Government and rebel factions so as to establish durable peace and stability in the Sudan and to facilitate the delivery of relief supplies. The draft resolution further calls on the international community to contribute generously to the emergency needs, recovery and development of the Sudan.

Draft resolution A/52/L.60, entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia", is sponsored by China, India, Kuwait, Lesotho, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The draft resolution is similar to that adopted on this subject during the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, except in those paragraphs dealing with the recent devastating floods that have worsened an already fragile humanitarian situation in some parts of Somalia.

In the draft resolution the General Assembly would appreciate the efforts of the international community in providing assistance to the Somali people and would call upon all Somali parties to seek peaceful means to resolve the ongoing political conflict. Noting with concern the absence of a central authority and the lack of effective civil institutions in the country, the General Assembly would emphasize that the Somali people, particularly at local levels, have primary responsibility for their own development and for the sustainability of rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. Thus, the draft resolution urges the international community to assist the Somali people at local levels in all those areas where peace and security prevail. In addition, it appeals to the international community to provide emergency disaster relief assistance to those areas which are affected by the recent severe floods.

I commend these draft resolutions to the General Assembly and request their adoption by consensus. I wish also to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Austria, who coordinated the consultations and successful negotiation of the texts.

Finally, I wish to express the African Group's appreciation to all Member States which supported its draft resolution A/52/L.37 entitled "Emergency assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of Burundi", consideration of which has been deferred to the resumed session of this Assembly in order to await the outcome of the summit of member States of the Arusha Initiative, which is scheduled to be held in January 1998.

Similarly, I wish to convey the Group's appreciation to all Member States that have supported draft resolution A/52/L.41 entitled "International assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola". This draft resolution is still being discussed, and we request its deferral until the resumed session of the General Assembly, as consensus does not exist at this time.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.34/Rev.1.

Mr. Albín (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am honoured to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, draft resolution A/52/L.34/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador". Bolivia and Italy have joined the list of sponsors of this draft resolution.

The preambular part of the draft resolution refers to the resolutions in which the General Assembly recognized the importance of international cooperation for El Salvador. It also refers to the report of the Secretary-General [A/52/433], which stresses the tremendous effort made by Salvadoran society to fulfil the commitments laid down in the Peace Agreements and to promote and consolidate the profound transformations that have taken place in the country since 1992.

The draft resolution notes with satisfaction the renewed expression by the Government of El Salvador and the Salvadoran political forces of their political will to consolidate peace and development through specific programmes and projects. The text recognizes that the reintegration of former combatants and demobilized members of the armed forces is a complex task the sustainability of which is linked to the broader context of economic, social and institutional development.

It also recognizes that, in spite of the national efforts and the support given by the international community, the implementation of priority political, economic, social and environmental programmes and projects in the process of consolidating peace continues to be affected by various factors.

After taking note with approval of the reports of the Secretary-General, the operative part of the draft resolution again expresses gratitude to all the members of the United Nations system, the donor community and the international development and financing institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, for the financial and technical assistance they have provided to El Salvador as a vital complement to national efforts.

The draft reaffirms the importance of the continuation of programmes for the strengthening of democratic institutions and the promotion of development, which constitute the collective aspirations for advancing the consolidation of peace, democracy and sustainable development in El Salvador.

It urges the Government of El Salvador and all political forces to support the programmes and strategies, particularly social welfare projects, designed to improve the lives of the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Recognizing the need for continued international support and cooperation as a complement to national efforts, the text reaffirms that external cooperation plays an important role in the consolidation of the peace process, the strengthening of democracy and sustainable development. Consequently, it appeals to the United Nations system, the donor community and the international financial institutions to continue to provide political, financial and technical support for the process of transformation to which the nation of El Salvador aspires.

Lastly, it requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

After more than a decade of bloody armed conflict, the Salvadoran people opted for peace. The arduous process of dialogue and negotiation, which required much resolve and tenacity, culminated in the signing of the Chapultepec Accord in 1992.

Since that time, five years ago, the Salvadoran people have begun an extraordinary undertaking of institutional reconstruction and social and economic development. This task is being accomplished, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General and the draft resolution itself, in a context of considerable complexity.

The process of profound transformation to which the people and the Government of El Salvador are committed involves, as in any other country in the world, opportunities and challenges. We, the sponsors, are convinced that by placing the supreme good of peace-building and reconciliation above all other considerations, Salvadorans will continue to demonstrate their conviction and strength, as a nation that aspires to the construction of a freer, more democratic and more just society with improved living conditions and well-being for its people.

As the Salvadoran people reaffirm day by day their noble commitment to renewal, transformation and consolidation, they have received political, financial and technical support from the international community. It must be noted, however, that the progressive development of the process in conditions of certainty and stability over the medium and long term requires that support to be maintained and increased. After all, the Salvadoran process, one of the most successful experiences of the United Nations, has already demonstrated that it is a good investment.

For these reasons, we, the sponsors, hope that the General Assembly will lend renewed political support to El Salvador, and we urge the international community to contribute generously to the reconstruction and

development of El Salvador. We trust that the draft resolution will be adopted unanimously by the Assembly.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Lebanon to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.36/Rev.1.

Mr. Hamdan (Lebanon) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation is honoured to introduce to the Assembly, on behalf of Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Djibouti, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mali, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Romania, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Yemen, the draft resolution contained in document A/52/L.36/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon", under agenda item 20 (b).

In its preambular paragraphs, the draft resolutions recalls the resolutions previously adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in this respect.

It also reaffirms the need to be aware of the magnitude of the requirements of Lebanon and the pressing need to continue to assist its Government in dealings with the impediments to national rehabilitation and reconstruction and the reactivation of human and economic resources resulting from the extensive destruction of its infrastructure.

In operative paragraph 1, the draft resolution appeals to all Member States and institutions to consider intensifying their efforts with a view to increasing all forms of support, including financial grants and soft loans given for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon. In particular, it calls upon donor countries to consider playing a full part in the consultative group to be established on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Lebanon.

In operative paragraph 2, the draft resolution calls upon all international organizations to direct their activities basically towards the implementation of programmes given priority by the Government concerning rehabilitation and reintegration of displaced persons and in the reconstruction and development of Baalbeck-Hermel and the south Lebanon region.

Finally, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implen entation of the present resolution.

We hope that the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

I should like to announce that the Secretariat has informed us that copies of the Secretary-General's report relating to this item, "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon," are now available.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Honduras to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.43/Rev.1.

Mr. Martínez Blanco (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am honoured to address the General Assembly to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.43/Rev.1, "International assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America," under item 20 (b) of the agenda. I should like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Sucharipa of Austria for having led the consultations that produced a consensus on this draft resolution.

In addition, I should like to note that the following countries have joined the original sponsors of the draft resolution: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Monaco, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

In recent years the countries of Central America have succeeded in moving systematically forward towards the consolidation of democracy, peace, respect for the rule of law and human rights, sustainable development and social equity. For the first time, we are enjoying complete peace and there are democratic Governments in all the countries of the Central American isthmus. The commitments embodied in the various accords and conventions that have resulted from Central American summit meetings attest to our common efforts and today constitute a frame of reference for the promotion and achievement of these regional objectives.

Significant events have taken place in our region in recent years, among which we might mention the creation of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, the implementation of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor Project, the Treaty on Central American Social Integration and the Tegucigalpa

International Declaration on Peace and Development in Central America. We also consider it important to mention the declaration of Nicaragua, signed by Panama, Belize and the Dominican Republic this year, which initiated the construction of the Central American Union and strengthened subregional integration.

The Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America is an integral development programme that focuses on the human being as the central and primary subject of development and gives priority to economic and social growth in our countries and to the protection and conservation of the ecosystem, as is evidenced by regional efforts in the areas of biodiversity, climate change and forests.

Through the joint presentation of the Presidents of the five countries in their statements in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly, the region seeks to consolidate political harmonization and coordination, strengthen economic integration and foster sustainable development.

The process of achieving genuine sustainable development far exceeds the individual capacities of the region's nations, and its genuine achievement in this region requires as an essential condition a harmonized plan for regional actions. Such achievements, based on priorities identified by the Central American countries themselves, rely to a large extent on international economic, financial and technical cooperation and on assistance to the region by the organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations, the donor community, international financial institutions and friendly States.

It is relevant here to highlight the need for the international community to continue its cooperation with the Central American countries by providing the required economic, financial and technical assistance in sustained fashion and on favourable terms in order to make the goals of the programme of sustainable development in Central America achievable. In this connection, we should like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to countries that have worked with us in this process of consolidating sustainable development in Central America.

Essentially, the draft resolution, in paragraph 2,

> "*Emphasizes* the importance of supporting and strengthening the new programme for international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance for Central America geared to the new circumstances in the region and based on the priorities laid down in the new sustainable development programme for the region".

In paragraph 7, it

> "*Again stresses* the need for the international community to maintain its cooperation with the Central American countries and to provide them with the necessary financial resources, in a sustained manner and on soft terms, with a view to promoting effectively the economic growth and development of the region".

We hope that, as in previous years, the draft resolution on this subject will be adopted by consensus in order to support the decision of the Central American Governments to harmonize their efforts to carry out updated programmes based on strategies of sustainable human development so as to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and of what, in our view, is the most important goal of the coming century: the recognition of the close relationship between democracy and development.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Ukraine to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.44/Rev.1.

Mr. Bohaievs'ky (Ukraine): On behalf of the delegations of the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.44/Rev.1, "Economic assistance to States affected by the implementation of the Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia", submitted under sub-item (b), "Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions", of agenda item 20, "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance".

This concise document focuses on the need for further economic assistance to the affected third States in the transition period following the termination of the sanctions regime against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The draft resolution welcomes the support that has already been provided by the international community to

the affected States, in view of the problems which the imposition of sanctions has produced, and renews the invitation to all Member States and the relevant international organizations within and outside the United Nations system, in particular the international financial institutions, to continue to take into account the special needs of the affected States in providing assistance to those States.

The draft resolution also appeals to the relevant international organizations to take appropriate steps in order to ensure active participation of the affected countries in the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation of the former Yugoslavia.

By this document the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, in order to assess the situation and to present an analysis of the implementation of the resolution, with a view to concluding consideration of this issue.

The implementation of sanctions showed that the Organization is not sufficiently prepared to respond adequately to possible problems and unforeseen negative consequences for the third States neighbouring the target country. These States, including my own country, Ukraine, have not received any practical assistance as compensation for their losses.

In this regard, we agree with the conclusion in the report of the Secretary-General that, as the focus of the United Nations humanitarian assistance programme has shifted from emergency relief operations to supporting capacity-building, the long-term support projects in the area of development efforts in the former Yugoslavia open up new possibilities for the affected and neighbouring States.

The active involvement of those States in the process of regional economic cooperation would be regarded as an element of a complex and effective mechanism to address their special economic problems.

In conclusion, let me express our appreciation to all delegations that sponsored this draft resolution and to representatives of those Member States that offered their constructive cooperation in the process of its preparation. We are especially grateful to the European Union for its understanding of our concerns.

We expect that delegations will support our draft resolution, and this support will be very much appreciated.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Tajikistan to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.46/Rev.1.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*interpretation from Russian*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/52/L.46/Rev.1 of 12 December 1997. Since the document was issued, Austria, Germany, India, Italy, the Netherlands, Pakistan and Portugal have become sponsors as well.

Since the General Assembly's adoption in April this year of its previous resolution on this question, there has been a breakthrough in the efforts to settle the conflict in Tajikistan. With the signing in Moscow of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, we have closed a very sad chapter in the history of my country and have laid the foundation for lasting peace and national reconciliation.

But peace in Tajikistan would hardly have been possible without the effective support of the United Nations, of the observer countries — Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — and of international organizations, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and others. I would like to express to all of them our enormous appreciation for the assistance and support they have given us and to reconfirm our readiness to continue to work constructively with them.

Unfortunately, the reality of the situation is such that the people of Tajikistan need strong international support. Without it, achieving peace and national reconciliation and overcoming the consequences of the conflict would be extremely difficult. The draft resolution before the General Assembly today is designed specifically to focus the attention of the international community on the acute humanitarian needs of Tajikistan and on the need to assist the country in implementing the General Agreement and in economic recovery.

In the preamble, the draft resolution welcomes the successful conclusion of the inter-Tajik talks, conducted under United Nations auspices since 1994, with the signing in Moscow on 27 June 1997 by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and the leader of the United Tajik Opposition of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan. It also welcomes the progress made by the

parties in the implementation of the General Agreement and the effective maintenance of the ceasefire between them since December 1996. The draft commends the efforts of the United Nations, in particular those of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Tajikistan and of the personnel of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, in assisting the parties in the implementation of the General Agreement.

The preamble notes that, despite the successful conclusion of the inter-Tajik talks and the efforts of the Government of Tajikistan, the economic situation in the country remains bleak and a large percentage of the population is extremely vulnerable. It bears in mind the close interrelationship between ensuring peace and achieving national reconciliation in Tajikistan and the ability of the country to meet the humanitarian needs of its people and to take effective steps towards the rapid revitalization of the economy. It reaffirms the urgent need to assist Tajikistan in its efforts to restore basic services and the infrastructure of the country.

The draft resolution expresses concern that the security situation in parts of Tajikistan remains volatile, while expressing deep concern at the recent attack on the United Nations and other humanitarian personnel in Tajikistan. It also expresses its deep concern about the danger posed by landmines in Tajikistan.

The preamble welcomes the completion of the voluntary repatriation of Tajik refugees from northern Afghanistan, and it stresses the importance of ensuring the voluntary return, in safety and dignity, of all refugees and displaced persons to their places of permanent residence. It expresses appreciation to the States, the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations and all relevant humanitarian organizations, agencies and non-governmental organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, that have responded and continue to respond positively to the humanitarian needs of Tajikistan.

In the operative part, the draft resolution takes note of the report of the Secretary-General and endorses the observations and recommendations set out therein. It welcomes the efforts aimed at achieving peace and national reconciliation in Tajikistan and encourages the parties to implement fully the General Agreement. It also encourages the Commission on National Reconciliation to continue its efforts aimed at the institution of a broad dialogue among the various political forces in the country in the interests of the restoration and strengthening of civil accord in Tajikistan.

The draft resolution welcomes with appreciation the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General in drawing the attention of the international community to the acute humanitarian problems of Tajikistan and in mobilizing assistance for the implementation of the General Agreement and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country. It welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to appoint the United Nations Resident Coordinator as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General. It welcomes the results of the donor conference convened by the Secretary-General at Vienna on 24 and 25 November 1997 to obtain international support dedicated to the implementation of the General Agreement.

The draft resolution encourages Member States and others concerned to continue assistance to alleviate the urgent humanitarian needs of Tajikistan and to offer support to Tajikistan for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of its economy. It welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to prepare a full-scale consolidated inter-agency appeal for humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan for a period of 12 months beginning in January 1998.

It strongly condemns the recent act of kidnapping of the United Nations and other humanitarian personnel and urges the parties to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of United Nations and other international humanitarian personnel as well as the safety and security of their premises.

It encourages the parties to cooperate in order to reduce the threat from the indiscriminate use of landmines to the civil population of Tajikistan and to the provision of humanitarian assistance. It requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the humanitarian situation in Tajikistan and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

By the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide to consider this item at its fifty-third session.

I wish to express appreciation to all those who have made a real contribution to the work of preparing this draft resolution, in particular the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, Mr. Ernst Sucharipa, who coordinated this work with great skill.

We hope that all delegations will be able to adopt this draft resolution by consensus.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Jamaica to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.56.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): I have the honour, on behalf of the sponsors, to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Emergency assistance to Montserrat", contained in document A/52/L.56. Since the document was issued, the following countries have become cosponsors: Croatia, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, India, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname.

We also wish to express appreciation to Ambassador Ernst Sucharipa of Austria for having so ably guided the informal consultations on agenda item 20.

Member States are aware of the grave situation in the small Caribbean island of Montserrat, where volcanic eruptions over the last two years have destroyed two thirds of the country. Several persons have lost their lives; thousands have lost their homes and their sources of livelihood. Infrastructural damage has rendered the country's air and sea ports unsafe; major destruction has occurred to the utilities system, with schools and the major hospital destroyed. In August this year, volcanic activity destroyed the island's capital, Plymouth. The overwhelming majority of Montserrat's population has been displaced, including to neighbouring countries in the Caribbean. The result is that the long-term economic and social development of Montserrat has been seriously jeopardized.

As Montserrat is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), its plight is naturally of grave concern to all CARICOM States, which have offered constructive support in the recovery efforts. We also acknowledge the commitment of the United Kingdom, both for emergency assistance to Montserratians as well as for the sustainable development of their territory. A number of other Governments and international agencies have also provided assistance. May I take this opportunity to express appreciation to those States and organizations which have responded to the appeal for assistance, including contributions to the Governor's Appeal Fund.

Montserrat remains a viable entity and the people of the island have expressed a wish to maintain their existence on their own land. The northern part of the country has been unaffected by the volcanic activity and is considered a safe zone for redevelopment and resettlement. The Government of Montserrat has therefore decided that redevelopment efforts should be concentrated in this area. The costs of the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Montserrat are, however, immense and will require a humanitarian gesture of solidarity from the international community.

It is in this context that draft resolution A/52/L.56 on economic assistance to Montserrat is being presented for adoption by the General Assembly. In its operative paragraphs, the draft resolution calls upon States to contribute generously to the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. It further calls upon the United Nations Development Programme to finalize its proposals for a package of emergency assistance to Montserrat; and upon the Secretary-General to monitor the situation in Montserrat with a view to assessing the ecological and developmental impacts of the volcanic eruptions as well as to assisting in the long-term needs of Montserratians, including the needs of evacuees and their rehabilitation.

It is the hope of the sponsors that, through the adoption of this draft resolution, tangible measures to assist the rebuilding and sustainable development of the island of Montserrat will be forthcoming. We commend the draft resolution to the General Assembly for adoption by consensus.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Morocco to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.58/Rev.1.

Mr. Snoussi (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*): I have the pleasure of introducing the draft resolution entitled "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti", contained in document A/52/L.58/Rev.1 on behalf of its sponsors: Andorra, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Djibouti, Egypt, France, Gabon, Greece, Guinea, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Yemen. The Comoros and Pakistan have also become sponsors.

Our aim is to continue to focus the attention of the international community on the critical economic and social situation in this brotherly and friendly country, in

the hope of further promoting feelings of solidarity towards it throughout the world.

We would like first and foremost to express our gratitude to those States and international organizations that have continued to provide financial and material support to Djibouti, particularly those that participated in and made pledges during the round table on Djibouti held at Geneva in May 1997.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General of our Organization most sincerely for his efforts to strengthen international cooperation for Djibouti.

The sponsors would like to recall that Djibouti — which is classified among the least developed countries of our world — faces problems related to the extremes of the local climate, which require the mobilization of resources that exceed its capacity. In fact, recurring droughts, torrential rains and floods have a negative impact, to say the least, on the economic and social development of the country and call for the commitment of substantial financial resources.

The situation in Djibouti is further exacerbated by the instability that prevails in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Somalia, which gives rise to flows of refugees and displaced persons, whose presence brings about unbearable pressures that cause security problems heretofore unknown in that country.

The sponsors of the draft resolution would like to stress, among other things, that despite its limited resources the Government of Djibouti is courageously facing the problems that assail it by adopting an appropriate economic and social policy, which shows its commitment to remedying the situation. Indeed, the Government's implementation of a structural adjustment programme, a programme for demobilization and a plan for national recovery are evidence of its commitment, and this cannot fail to move the international community to greater generosity.

Finally, the sponsors hope that the Member States of our Organization will examine this draft resolution carefully and conscientiously so that it can be adopted by consensus, as the humanitarian cause that it embodies is certainly laudable and worthy of our support.

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on the representative of Kazakhstan, who will introduce draft resolution A/52/L.61/Rev.1.

Ms. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan): I have the honour, on behalf of 37 countries, to introduce the draft resolution entitled "International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan", contained in document A/52/L.61/Rev.1. Armenia, Chile, Egypt, Hungary, India, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal and Tunisia have joined as sponsors of the draft.

This is the first draft resolution on this subject to be introduced in the General Assembly. It refers to an issue of paramount importance to my country, which has inherited severe environmental problems from the past.

As mentioned in the draft resolution, the nuclear testing ground in Semipalatinsk, which was inherited by Kazakhstan, has become a matter of serious concern for the people and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan with regard to its consequences for the lives and health of the people, especially children, as well as for the environment of the region.

Over a period of more that 40 years, 470 nuclear explosions were conducted at this former Soviet nuclear test site, which used to be the largest in the world. The tests caused serious damage to the health of 1.2 million people and to the ecosystem of Kazakhstan. The highest level of oncological diseases in our country has been registered in that region. Since 1950 the child mortality rate there has risen five to tenfold, and a decrease in the average life span of the population is apparent.

The draft resolution stresses the need for the international community to pay greater attention to the issue of the human, ecological and socio-economic dimensions of the situation in the Semipalatinsk region. It recognizes the need to coordinate national and international efforts aimed at the rehabilitation of the health of the affected population and the environment in this region, bearing in mind the need for know-how in minimizing and mitigating these problems.

The operative paragraphs of the draft resolution contain the request to the Secretary-General to compile a report on the humanitarian situation in the Semipalatinsk region, in order to assist the Government of Kazakhstan in the formulation of a recommended overall action plan to address the humanitarian, ecological and economic problems and needs of the region.

The draft resolution urges the international community to provide assistance in the formulation and implementation of special programmes and projects; invites all States, relevant multilateral organizations and other entities, as well as non-governmental organizations, to share their knowledge and experience in order to contribute to the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region. The draft resolution also contains a decision to consider the humanitarian situation in the Semipalatinsk region at the fifty-third session of the General Assembly under the agenda item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance".

The adoption of this draft resolution will be a matter of vital importance to my country and a remarkable sign of support from the international community. It is very encouraging for the people and the Government of Kazakhstan to know that the Member States of the United Nations, its specialized agencies, funds and programmes share their concern with regard to the problems of the Semipalatinsk region.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the sponsors of this draft resolution on behalf of the delegation of Kazakhstan.

The sponsors propose that the draft resolution be adopted by consensus.

Mrs. Beneke (El Salvador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to thank the representative of Mexico, His Excellency Ambassador Gustavo Albín, for his introduction of the draft resolution contained in document A/52/L.34/Rev.1 on assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador. Our thanks go also to the sponsors of that draft resolution — which, I am pleased to note, now include Venezuela — as well as to all the friendly countries that we are certain will lend us their support in order to ensure that this draft resolution is adopted by consensus.

We wish also to thank the Secretary-General for his excellent report on this item, which describes the economic situation in El Salvador and the progress made in reconstruction and in the strengthening of democracy during the period 1995-1996.

Not quite six years have elapsed since the historic signing of the Peace Agreements in January 1992, which put an end to the armed conflict and established peace, thus laying the foundation for a process of democratic transition. In that short period of time, we have wrought a tremendous transformation, making El Salvador an example of the success of a peace process facilitated by the United Nations.

The consolidation and maintenance of peace have taken place in a complex and difficult context, but they are based on the undeniable political will of the Government of El Salvador and all its political forces to keep that peace at all costs. Reconciliation has been the key factor in the success of our peace process, and we are striving to maintain an environment conducive to the promotion of peace, freedom, justice and social equity in order to continue with the consolidation of democratic governance and to achieve sustainable development.

In El Salvador's post-war period, the primary objective of the Government's policies is the country's sustainable development, with due consideration given to its three components: economic development, social development and environmental protection. We are sparing no effort to develop socio-economic and environmental programmes and projects that will reach out to and benefit all Salvadorans, particularly in the most vulnerable segments of the population.

The Government, through its economic and social development plan, has succeeded in stabilizing the country economically in the wake of the difficult situation that prevailed in the 1980s. The goal is to make El Salvador a competitive country capable of tackling the challenges involved in globalization and the liberalization of world markets, thus ensuring sustained growth that will promote the well-being of the population as a whole.

National reconstruction and democracy in El Salvador have made significant progress, as is clear from the successes achieved in strengthening new democratic institutions such as the Office of the National Counsel for Human Rights, the National Civil Police and the National Public Security Academy, as well as from the progress made in electoral reform and in reform programmes aimed at a better administration of justice. Considerable advances have also been made in other areas identified as priorities in the Peace Agreements, such as the economic and social reintegration of ex-combatants and demobilized personnel; the economic and social needs of peoples in the post-war period; and the improvement of social infrastructures, including education, health care and the environment.

International cooperation has played, and continues to play, a significant role by complementing national efforts. For that reason, I should like to take this opportunity to thank the organs, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system; the Governments of the cooperating countries, in particular Austria, Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States; and the European Union, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, which have responded by providing valuable technical and financial support, thereby helping to ensure the successful implementation of the peace agreements; as well as all the other countries and entities that in one way or another have cooperated with El Salvador.

El Salvador is confronting the challenges of the new international agenda, as globalization compels us to address the problems common to the developing countries: strengthening the economy, upgrading the infrastructure, combating poverty, and achieving sustainable development.

Allow me to conclude by quoting from the report of the Secretary-General:

> "I should like to take this opportunity to call on the international community, which has contributed so much to the progress made in El Salvador since the signing of the peace agreements, to continue its political, technical and financial support for the complex process of rebuilding and developing the country." [A/52/433, para. 85]

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/52/L.14/Rev.2, L.16/Rev.2, L.32/Rev.1, L.33/Rev.1, L.34/Rev.1, L.36/Rev.1, L.40/Rev.1, L.42/Rev.1, L.43/Rev.1, L.44/Rev.1, L.45/Rev.1, L.46/Rev.1, L.48/Rev.1, L.56, L.57/Rev.1, L.58/Rev.1, L.60 and L.61/Rev.1.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to make statements in explanation of vote before the voting. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Hamdan (Lebanon) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its position on draft resolution A/52/L.45/Rev.1, entitled "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel". My delegation welcomes that draft resolution and stresses that every possible effort should be made at the international level to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel. We join in condemning actions targeting such personnel.

But it is important to take account of the humanitarian activities and services of international humanitarian agencies outside the context of United Nations emergency humanitarian assistance, for example those of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of agencies associated with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. These agencies do not act within the framework of resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, but they have a recognized status based on the principle of impartiality and independence. These agencies have repeatedly stated their reservations about the use of force in the framework of providing humanitarian assistance, because of its negative repercussions for the activities of humanitarian agencies that provide assistance to those in need, including in times of emergency.

We consider that the elements set out in paragraph 9 cover the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. We look forward with interest to the report of the Secretary-General on this item.

All States must cooperate to strike a balance between the needed security of humanitarian personnel and the imperatives of the sovereignty of the States concerned. We believe that the Sixth Committee, which deals with legal matters, could consider formulating guidelines or even an international convention on this matter.

Ms. Hall (United States of America): I wish to speak on draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1, "Emergency assistance to the Sudan". My delegation regrets that, despite several intensive rounds of negotiations between interested Member States and the delegation of Sudan, we were not able to reach consensus on the text of a draft resolution governing emergency assistance to Sudan. My Government strongly supports the United Nations Operation Lifeline Sudan and has contributed both money and food towards its successful operation.

For the second year in a row, the Sudanese position has prevented agreement on important issues of humanitarian assistance. Sudan's Government is at war with the citizens of its own country and has again chosen

not to cooperate with the international community, which has devoted so much energy and treasure to help Sudan's war-affected citizens. We question whether the Sudanese Government delegation ever sought a consensus text in good faith, and urge this body to vote against the draft resolution.

Mr. Rahmtalla (Sudan): We would like to express our disappointment that once again the humanitarian work coordinated by the United Nations is being subjected to politics and narrow political interests by some donor countries. As was the case with a similar text during the fifty-first session, draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1, on emergency assistance to the Sudan, was unanimously endorsed and sponsored by the African Group at the United Nations. Its preambular and operative parts are substantially identical to those of resolution 51/30 I.

In recent weeks, our delegation has been engaged in serious and good-faith negotiations with interested delegations of donor countries under the chairmanship of His Excellency the Permanent Representative of Austria. In those informal consultations, we discussed and considered written proposals presented to us by the European Union.

The General Assembly is entitled to know how far we have gone to accommodate the concerns reflected in those proposals. However, we have stated that we are not prepared to reverse the consensus and the agreed language of resolution 46/182, which set out the principles and guidelines for the coordination of all humanitarian assistance undertaken by the Organization. We have displayed unprecedented flexibility by accepting almost all of what was proposed to us. We regret to observe that the insistence by some on deleting references to the participation of the Government in vital functions of Operation Lifeline Sudan — such as the process of assessment, allocation, distribution and evaluation of humanitarian assistance — contravenes the principles and guidelines for humanitarian assistance set out in resolution 46/182.

The United States delegation is alone in rejecting any reference to cooperation by the Government with the United Nations, despite acknowledgement of this cooperation in the Secretary-General's report, which describes it as positive. This was later confirmed, during the course of the consultations, by the representative of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

The insistence by the same delegation on removing from the text of the draft resolution the reference to national sovereignty constitutes a serious compromise of a fundamental principle enshrined in the United Nations Charter: respect for the national sovereignty of every State.

The new operative paragraph 7 of A/52/L.42/Rev.1, uses consensus language agreed by all participants in the informal consultations — that is to say, the European Union, Canada and Japan — with the exception of the United States of America. We have incorporated this part of the text so as to meet the concerns of most of the donor countries reflected in the proposal by the European Union and to display our resolve for resuming the peace talks under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development early next year for the achievement of peace and stability in our country.

The United States of America's position on the text of the draft provides yet more material evidence revealing the real anti-peace agenda the American Administration is seeking to impose on the Sudan, regardless of the passive consequences which such action may have in terms of loss of life and the suffering of innocent affected populations in need of humanitarian assistance.

Here I would like to bring to the attention of representatives that the effective contribution made by the Government of the United States of America since the beginning of the current year to Operation Lifeline Sudan, which is the essence of this draft resolution, amounts to zero.

Before I conclude, I would like to express to the African Group our appreciation and gratitude for the genuine African solidarity shown, as did our Heads of State and Government at the Organization of African Unity OAU summit in Harare last June. We also wish to express appreciation and gratitude to all members of this Assembly that voted in favour of the resolution on this subject last year.

In the light of the aforementioned circumstances, we have no doubt that members of this Assembly will again lend their valuable support to this draft resolution, given its purely humanitarian nature and the hope it carries for the achievement of peace and stability in the Sudan.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg)(*interpretation from French*): The European Union regrets that it was not possible to arrive at a consensus on draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Emergency assistance to the Sudan". We are deeply concerned over the humanitarian

situation in the Sudan, and we would like to reconfirm our commitment to respond as fully as possible to the humanitarian needs of the Sudanese population, in particular through Operation Lifeline Sudan, which must be able to carry out its work effectively and in cooperation with all the parties concerned.

The European Union is of the opinion that it is highly regrettable that the Assembly will vote again this year on a draft resolution on humanitarian assistance to an individual country or region. During the informal consultations led by the Permanent Representative of Austria, Mr. Ernst Sucharipa, a compromise seemed to be within our grasp, even on paragraphs that were politically sensitive. While recognizing the sensitive nature of operative paragraphs 2 and 7, the European Union showed flexibility in order to respond to the concerns of the sponsors of the draft resolution.

In our opinion, it is regrettable that, despite these efforts, a text that differs only slightly from the original one has been submitted. Accordingly, the European Union will vote against the draft resolution contained in document A/52/L.42/Rev.1.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take decisions on the draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 20 and its sub-items (a), (b), (d), (e) and (f).

Under agenda item 20, draft resolution A/52/L.45/Rev.1 is entitled "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/52/L.45/Rev.1 without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.45/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/167).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Under sub-item 20 (a), draft resolution A/52/L.48/Rev.1 is entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/52/L.48/Rev.1 without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.48/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/168).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Under sub-item (b), the Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.14/Rev.2, entitled "Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.14/Rev.2 was adopted (resolution 52/169 A).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Now the Assembly will take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.16/Rev.2, entitled "Special assistance to Central African countries receiving refugees".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.16/Rev.2 was adopted (resolution 52/169 B).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.34/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.34/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/169 C).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.36/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.36/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/169 D).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.40/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/169 E).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Emergency assistance to the Sudan".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Burundi, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Samoa, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1 was adopted by 95 votes to 38, with 13 abstentions (resolution 52/169 F).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Bhutan and Burundi informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of the Republic of Moldova had intended to vote against.]

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.43/Rev.1, entitled "International assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.43/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/169 G).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.44/Rev.1, entitled "Economic assistance to States affected by the implementation of the Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.44/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/169 H).

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.46/Rev.1, entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.46/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/169 I).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.56, entitled "Emergency assistance to Montserrat".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.56 was adopted (resolution 52/169 J).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.58/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.58/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution A/52/169 K).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.60, entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.60 was adopted (resolution 52/169 L).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.61/Rev.1, entitled "International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.61/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/169 M).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* Under sub-item (d), draft resolution A/52/L.57/Rev.1 is entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.57/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/170).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* Under sub-item (e), draft resolution A/52/L.32/Rev.1 is entitled "Participation of volunteers, 'White Helmets', in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.32/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/171).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* Under sub-item (f), draft resolution A/52/L.33/Rev.1 is entitled "Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster".

May I take that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/52/L.33/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 52/172).

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I call on the representative of Ukraine on a point of order.

Mr. Bohaievs'ky (Ukraine): I apologize for delaying the decision on a very important draft resolution, A/52/L.44/Rev.1, which my delegation initiated and which was sponsored by a number of delegations.

First of all, I would like once again to express our deep appreciation to all delegations that joined the consensus on draft resolution A/52/L.44/Rev.1, as well as on the draft resolution concerning assistance to Chernobyl.

It had been my intention, before a decision was taken on A/52/L.44/Rev.1, to bring to the Assembly's attention that, at the last moment, and after I had introduced the draft resolution, we were approached by one delegation with a request to make a minor change in operative paragraph 5. We had little time to consult the other sponsors, and we reached a general agreement that we could accept the request that the words "of the former

Yugoslavia" could be dropped from the end of operative paragraph 5.

Unfortunately, we did not manage — and we respect the procedures, but in some situations it is very important to have the final approval or agreement of all interested delegations.

For this reason, I wanted to make this clarification and ask whether, taking this fact into consideration, operative paragraph 5 of the final version of the text could end with the words "reconstruction and rehabilitation" and the words "of the former Yugoslavia" could be dropped. We would very much appreciate it.

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I do not believe that the Assembly, having adopted without a vote the text that was introduced by the representative of Ukraine — draft resolution A/52/L.44/Rev.1 — can now amend or revise the text. However, the explanation and clarification given by the representative of Ukraine will be reflected in the official record of the meeting. Thus, interested delegations will be able to take into account, the request by some delegations to delete some words from operative paragraph 5. I hope that this will be satisfactory.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions.

Ms. McVey (Canada): Canada deeply regrets that, once again, consensus on the important issue of emergency assistance to the Sudan was not achieved. Canada voted against draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1, on emergency assistance to the Sudan. Our vote should not be construed as a vote against the principles of humanitarian assistance but rather as a reservation about language contained in the text which could detract from a coordinated international effort to effectively deliver humanitarian assistance to the Sudan.

Canada has fully supported and will continue fully to support the humanitarian work of Operation Lifeline Sudan. As Operation Lifeline Sudan constitutes the basic framework for assistance to the Sudan, it is of paramount importance that all parties in the Sudan cooperate and operate in accordance with the 1994 tripartite Agreement and that the principles and guidelines of Operation Lifeline Sudan are duly respected to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the operation. Safe and unhindered access for humanitarian personnel must also be ensured.

It is a great shame that the Member States of the United Nations cannot join together and agree on a resolution to provide humanitarian assistance in the Sudan. The challenges before the parties involved are now even greater.

Mr. Peleg (Israel): Israel joined the consensus, as we did on similar drafts in previous years, on draft resolution A/52/L.57/Rev.1, "Assistance to the Palestinian people", and I would like to explain our position.

For many years Israel has been cooperating fully with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as with other international organizations in implementing programmes aimed at improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In this respect, my delegation believes that the United Nations Special Coordinator in the West Bank and Gaza can play a significant role in achieving the social and economic goals set out by those organizations. We welcome the concerted efforts of Member States, international financial institutions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to aid in the development of the West Bank and Gaza. We have made general efforts to reach a consensus on draft resolution A/52/L.57/Rev.1, which addresses the important issue of assistance to the Palestinian people. We believe that economic and social progress can be advanced only through cooperation. Economic development and improved living conditions in the territories will encourage peace and stability in the region.

In this regard, we feel constrained to mention that in our opinion, assistance to the Palestinian people should be as tangible as possible, and on the ground. The holding of conferences and seminars cannot and should not replace direct economic assistance. If the economic situation is as serious as the draft resolution contends, then surely the funds available should be applied towards directly alleviating that situation and not for the purpose of holding yet another seminar.

Israel's participation in the consensus on the draft resolution should not be construed as implying any position regarding the present status of the territories referred to as "occupied territories". Additionally, our support does not carry any implication regarding Israel's position on the permanent status of those territories

which, in accordance with the Declaration of Principles, signed on 13 September 1993, is a matter to be negotiated between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Israel hopes that at the fifty-third session of the General Assembly there will be more consensus resolutions on the issues relating to the Middle East, including the resolution on the Middle East peace process, regarding which Israel expended much effort this year in the hope of its being adopted by the General Assembly, rather than one-sided political resolutions completely divorced from reality.

Mr. A'Ala (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution on assistance to the Palestinian people, contained in document A/52/L.57/Rev.1, which was adopted a moment ago, on the basis of the continuous support of the Syrian Arab Republic for the efforts to support the Palestinian people and provide assistance to them.

My delegation supports the operative paragraphs calling for assistance to the Palestinian people to help them overcome the immense challenges they are facing and to assist them in fulfilling their needs and promote their socio-economic development.

However, my delegation reserves its position on some of the preambular paragraphs included in the resolution just adopted, as they do not reflect the development of the crisis facing the peace process in the Middle East or the reality of the situation.

The Syrian Arab Republic believes that taking the right approach to socio-economic development for the Palestinian people and alleviating their suffering means removing the real reasons for this suffering, reflected in the continuous Israeli occupation. The right approach requires implementation of United Nations resolutions aimed at putting an end to the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories — occupied since 1967 — and steering away from the politics of closure and the economic embargo imposed on the Palestinian people. Furthermore, the seizure of lands, the exploitation of natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territories, expanding settlement activities and pursuit of a policy of impediments and obstacles to the peace process in the Middle East represent the crux of the crisis currently faced by that process.

As for the Israeli allegations we have just heard, to the effect that while Israel supports international efforts to assist the Palestinian people, it does not recognize, at the same time, that the territories referred to in the draft resolution are occupied territories: these remarks are ridiculous. They are an attempt to delude world public opinion and take lightly the will of the international community, as expressed in numerous relevant United Nations resolutions, especially those of the Security Council.

This is also aimed at evading the bases and the principles of the peace process in the Middle East, which was launched in Madrid in 1991.

Ms. Kløvstad (Norway): Norway deeply regrets that in spite of sincere efforts it did not prove possible to reach consensus on draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1, on assistance to the Sudan, due to lack of agreement on several of the paragraphs in the draft. Norway therefore voted against draft resolution A/52/L.42/Rev.1.

Operation Lifeline Sudan is the major framework for assistance to the Sudan. It is of vital importance that all parties to the Operation work in accordance with the 1994 tripartite Agreement and the principles and guidelines of the Operation itself, in order to ensure its efficiency and effectiveness.

Furthermore, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian organizations and their personnel must be ensured. Norway has a long-standing commitment to development efforts in the Sudan and to contributing to creating peace and reconciliation in the country. We will continue these efforts, and I want to make it clear that our vote today should not be seen to be directed against the principles of humanitarian assistance, or indeed against extending such assistance to the Sudan.

Mr. Džundev (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): My delegation joined the consensus on draft resolution A/52/L.44/Rev.1, just adopted by the General Assembly, which was ably introduced this morning by the representative of Ukraine.

We consider this decision by the General Assembly to be very important. In our view, however, the resolution does not adequately request States and international organizations to respond satisfactorily to the needs of the affected countries, one of which is my own.

We have some difficulty agreeing with the content of operative paragraph 5, since, as is widely known, the situation of each State of the former federation is

different. In the context of this resolution, the phrase "the former Yugoslavia" has no meaning.

Mr. Cho (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to make a statement in explanation of position in connection with draft resolution A/52/L.48/Rev.1, which was just adopted by consensus.

The Republic of Korea strongly supports the humanitarian assistance activities of the United Nations to address humanitarian crises and disasters. Accordingly, we attach great importance to the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations system in humanitarian assistance activities through a more strategic approach.

We believe that the humanitarian assistance activities of the United Nations system should be more coordinated, effective and transparent. In this regard, we unreservedly support the establishment of the new Office of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the recommendations of the Secretary-General on strengthening coordination in humanitarian affairs, as contained in his report A/51/950.

In this connection, my delegation particularly wishes to stress the following points. In implementing humanitarian assistance, we all know that responsibility lies first and foremost with the States in which such emergencies occur. Therefore, the United Nations efforts for humanitarian assistance must be linked to the encouragement of self-help efforts by the affected States to take care of their own victims.

Secondly, we also wish to reiterate the vital need to secure full access for humanitarian assistance personnel to victims of humanitarian disasters in affected areas. We must keep in mind that unless full transparency is ensured in the distribution of the assistance provided, the effectiveness of such assistance will inevitably be undermined.

Lastly, the humanitarian assistance activities of the United Nations must no doubt be guided by the principle of humanity. We hope in particular that the United Nations-system organizations involved in humanitarian assistance do not lose sight of the legitimate requirements of the United Nations in providing humanitarian assistance to encourage the States concerned to pursue a national policy in accordance with the purposes and basic principles of the United Nations Charter and various international legal regimes, such as, in particular, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which all Members of the United Nations and the international community as a whole are to promote.

Having said that, my delegation looks forward to the submission of the report of the Secretary-General, as requested in the operative paragraph of the resolution we have just adopted. We hope that the Secretary-General's report will fully take into account the points we have just raised.

With that understanding, we joined the consensus on adopting the resolution.

The Acting President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I call on the representative of Costa Rica on a point of order.

Ms. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish to state that Costa Rica joined the sponsors of the draft resolutions contained in the following documents: A/52/L.45/Rev.1, entitled "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel"; A/52/L.56, entitled "Emergency assistance to Montserrat"; and A/52/L.61/Rev.1, entitled "International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan". We fully support every aspect of these resolutions.

The Acting President: (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am sure all members of the General Assembly will join me in thanking sincerely Ambassador Ernst Sucharipa of Austria, who, as we all know, undertook the long and arduous task of holding consultations and negotiations on the resolutions that we have just considered and adopted under agenda item 20.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I should like to thank Ambassador Sucharipa. We are very grateful to him.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (a), (d), (e) and (f) of agenda item 20?

It was so decided.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 20.

I should like to inform members that the consideration of draft resolution A/52/L.37, concerning Burundi, and draft resolution A/52/L.41, concerning Angola, will be taken up at a later date to be announced.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.